TERRITORY

GEOGRAPHY

The Sanpoil lived in a region consisting mainly of treeless deserts and subject to great ranges in temperature (Plate 4). In the extreme northern and eastern portions of their territory the hills were clad with evergreens but these areas were used only for hunting. All permanent settlements were on the Columbia river since there the climate was milder, driftwood was available for fuel, water was always at hand in any quantity and travel was made easy by canoe.

All of eastern Washington and portions of adjoining states and British Columbia are drained by the Columbia and its tributaries. This great river has cut a huge gorge hundreds of feet deep through the lava plateau over which it flows. Where it is not confined within a canyon the banks are in the form of gravel terraces or benches, one above the other, which extend for considerable distances. It was on the lowermost series of these benches that most of the native villages were located. The plateau is a bed of basalt, 4000 feet deep in some places, formed by a succession of lava flows. This originally level plain has been considerably broken up by gorges cut by ancient streams and by the Columbia river at times when it was temporarily blocked from its main channel. These dry canyons are known as coulees. The greatest of these, the Grand Coulee, was cut by the river when the Okanogan glacier filled the upper Columbia valley at the "Big Bend." Minor uplifts have further modified the topography since the lava was laid down.

Sanpoil territory on the north extended into the physiographic province known as the Okanogan highlands. This is a northwestern projection of the Rocky mountains with elevations of 5000 and 6000 feet. The gently rounded hills are composed chiefly of granite and are fairly well wooded.[3]

The mean monthly temperature varies from 20 degrees F. in December to 66 degrees F. in July in the northern part of the territory (Republic). In the region south of the river the variation is from 24 to 74 degrees F., the extremes being reached in the same months (Wilbur).[4] Maximum summer temperatures of 115 degrees F. and minimum winter temperatures of minus 25 degrees F. have been recorded. Slightly less extreme figures are quite common.

The average annual precipitation over the whole of the former habitat is about 13 inches. Most of this falls in the winter months in the form of snow except in the extreme north (Republic) where the monthly distribution is very irregular and spread throughout the year.[4] Snow remains on the ground throughout the winter months.

Humidity is low; the annual mean percentage is probably not over 65.

Storm centers are normally north of the area, causing prevailing winds to blow up the Columbia river. In the late winter and early spring these warm, dry winds are called chinooks. They cause a rapid melting of snows.

Two plant life zones, the Upper Sonoran and the Arid Transition, are represented in this area. The former is typical of the Columbia plains or lava plateau

[3] Saunders, *The Physical Geography of Washington*, pages 311-12, 314.
[4] Information furnished by Mr. Albert L. Seeman of the Department of Geography, University of Washington.

2: Ray E-5 (1928-1930) 1932 Southeast Salish
Sanpoil

while the latter characterizes the lower reaches of the Okanogan highlands. The most conspicuous plant of the Upper Sonoran of this region is the sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata*). Other prominent plants include rabbit brush (*Chrysothamnus nauseosus*), antelope brush (*Purshia tridentata*) and dragon sagewort (*Artemisia Dracunculus*). The Arid Transition zone is divided into two subareas. The lower is characterized by bunchgrass (*Agropyron spicatum*) and often called the bunchgrass prairies. The upper division is typified by the presence of yellow pine (*Pinus ponderosa*) forests. The bunchgrass prairies appear a short distance north of the Columbia river and shade into the pine forests just north of Nespelem.[5]

HABITAT

The accompanying map (Figure 1) indicates the exact territory occupied by the Sanpoil and the names of adjoining peoples.

In northeastern Washington, about 85 miles south of the Canadian boundary, the Columbia river abruptly changes its course from south to westward. This has come to be known as the Big Bend of the Columbia, and the adjacent territory to the south of the river is called locally the Big Bend country. This general area, together with that included within the bend, was originally occupied by the Sanpoil. The confluence of the Sanpoil and the Columbia rivers marked the center of population but the geographical center was somewhat north of this point, near Lake Annum (Buffalo Lake). The southern boundary of the area was approximately a straight line running east and west at about 47° 40′ latitude. The eastern boundary intersected this line about 15 miles west of the town of Davenport. From that point it continued in a northeasterly direction to the bend of the river, or just west of the village called Peach. The boundary line then followed the river northward to Hunters, where it veered westward and connected with the Kettle river range of mountains; this range formed the remaining portion of the eastern territorial limit. A line drawn directly eastward from Republic to the Kettle river mountains would represent the northern boundary with fair accuracy. On the west the boundary line proceeded from Republic to Kartaro, then southward across the river toward Coulee City.

All villages were located along the Columbia river; therefore the boundary points on the river were much more clearly defined than in other parts of the territory. The former were determined by the actual extent of the villages, the latter merely by the greatest extent of territory covered during hunting and root gathering expeditions. The area thus recognized as properly belonging to the Sanpoil comprised about 1600 square miles.[6] Approximately 85 miles of the course of the Columbia were included and both sides of the river were occupied except for the short distance between Miles and Hunters.

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[5] Piper, *Flora of the State of Washington*, pages 36, 47-48.

[6] It is somewhat misleading, however, to speak of territory *belonging* to the Sanpoil and to designate boundaries as definite lines. The nature of boundaries and concepts concerning territorial ownership are discussed at length in the section on political organization, pages 109.

HUNTING

221 Practically the only economic pursuit in which the Sanpoil engaged during
224 the winter months was hunting (spɪ·'xəm). The deer, by far the most important game animal, was hunted from November to March. It furnished fresh meat to supplement the winter diet of dried foods, and supplied materials for clothing, especially moccasins. Also, as spring approached, the stored foodstuffs were often depleted. In such emergencies the deer was ardently sought since a successful hunt made available large quantities of fresh meat. Smaller animals were taken during these months as well, but they were of negligible economic importance as compared with the deer. Elk were also hunted during this time, but they existed in much smaller numbers and were proportionately harder to find.

221 A certain amount of hunting was done in the spring and fall. Prior to the
224 fishing season, while the women were gathering roots on the south side of the Columbia, the men often hunted rabbits, ground hogs, fowl and other small game.
462 During the period intervening between the summer and fall fishing seasons, at which time the women were engaged in berry picking, the men usually hunted antelope in the Grand Coulee country or small game north of the Columbia. Almost no hunting was done during the summer; this time was completely occupied with fishing activities.

Deer were seldom hunted in the spring or fall because of the difficulty of taking the animals simply by stalking with the bow. In the winter, when the ground was nearly always covered with snow, the deer were placed at a disadvantage. Even at that time, however, deer hunting was usually conducted in parties.

133 Hunting expeditions, prior to the coming of the whites, did not necessarily
224 involve making trips far from the village. A range of mountains extends from the "big bend" of the Columbia up into British Columbia, between the Columbia river on the east and the Sanpoil river on the west. Many of the peaks attain an elevation of 6000 feet. Formerly these mountains were plentifully supplied with game. Buffalo Ridge, above Lake Annum, and the Coyote Creek hills in the northern part of Sanpoil territory, were favorite areas for deer hunting. On the east side of the Columbia river, in sɪnəkə'lt and Colville territories, are the Huckleberry mountains. The Nespelem and Sanpoil often hunted there, since they were friendly with the peoples of that region.

224 Hunting definitely took a second place as compared to fishing as an econom-
226 ically important activity. Game was perhaps roughly equivalent, quantitatively,
262 to roots and berries in the diet of the group. On the other hand, considered on the basis of necessity for a balanced diet, the vegetable foods were indispensible, whereas such was not the case with game.

DEER, ELK AND ANTELOPE HUNTING

224 As stated above, deer hunting was usually a group venture. Anyone might
624 organize a hunting party but in each community certain men were reputed to be good hunting leaders and usually only these instigated trips. Others would have

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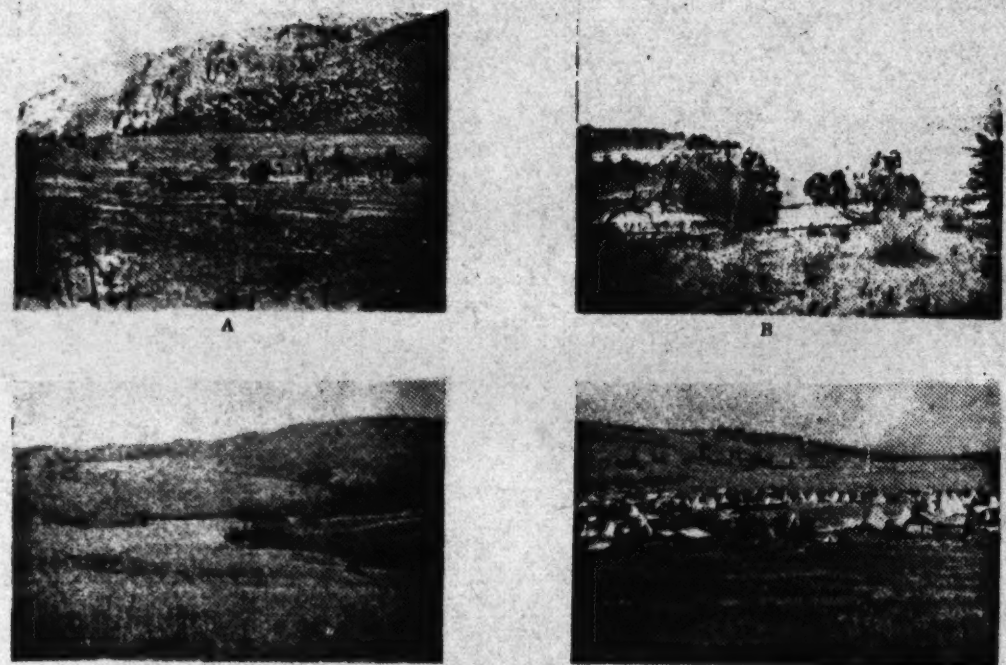

PLATE 4. (A) Site of the principal Sanpoil village, at the mouth of the Sanpoil River. (B) The Columbia River opposite fig. A, with the Sanpoil River in the foreground. (C) Lake Annum (Buffalo Lake) with the Sanpoil mountains in the background. (D) Modern camp circle at the present village of Nespelem.

•133

13 We have the following to date this quake. Cecile, now (1930) about fifty-eight, had just been born. (The quake was felt in her own country, the Kalispel.) Lucy Joe, now over seventy, said she was ten fourteen and married about that time, but Cecile stated that Lucy Joe had told her she already had children. (Lucy Joe said the earthquake rattled houses and continued for a year.) Julie Josephine, probably about eighty, already had a child at the time. These data place the earthquake in the early eighteen-seventies.

The best identification of the earthquake would seem to be the very strong shocks of December 10 and 11, 1872, centering at Helena, Montana. This fits best with the statement that the shocks occurred on two separate days about Christmas. There are two other possibilities: the destructive quake of March 26, 1872, centering in Inyo County, southeastern California (which was felt as far away as Marion City, Oregon, Missouri), and the widely felt shock of November 22, 1873, centering on the southern Oregon coast (Heck, Earthquake History of the United States, 49; Bolden, Catalogue of Earthquakes on the Pacific Coast, 88-92, 96).

The fall of rocks on the Columbia which accompanied this should be datable, but I have been unable to find adequate references. William S. Lewis states that it occurred in 1874, but without citing his warrant (Coone, Reminiscences of a Pioneer Woman, 20). No severe shocks in this area during 1874 are listed in the authorities cited above. - L.S.

>4

1/ [For context of this footnote, see p. 173(A), category 116. -- Analyst]

p. 173 (C)

7:Teit E-5 (1904-1909) 1930 NR19 Southeast Salish NR19
Kalispel
Spokan

Lower Kutenai on the north, Colville and Lake on the west, Spokan and Coeur d'Alêne on the south, and the Pend d'Oreilles on the east. 101

The Spokan.—The Spokan occupied that part of eastern Washington immediately south of the Kalispel and west of the Coeur d'Alêne. It seems that the bulk of the tribe was on the Spokane and Little Spokane Rivers. South they claimed the country to Cow Creek, and, according to some, along this creek almost or quite to Palouse River. North their country embraced the present Spokan Reservation, Loon Lake, Deer Park Lake, Peone Prairie, and all the northern feeders of the Spokane. Their western boundary seems to have been approximately a line running about due south from the mouth of Spokane River and passing through Ritzville. The Spokan hardly touched Columbia River at any point. They had for neighbors the Coeur d'Alêne on the east, the Kalispel and Colville on the north, the Sanpoil and Columbia on the west, and the Paloos on the south.[23] 131

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE COUNTRY.—The country formerly inhabited by the Spokan is arid in the lower valleys, but at higher levels very much of it consists of rolling, grass-covered plateaus and prairies with comparatively little timber. Much of the northern part of the Pend d'Oreilles country and most of the Kalispel country are more or less heavily forested. A great deal of it is hilly or mountainous, but there are also many flat open parts and meadows with luxuriant grass. Altogether the territories of the Flathead group of tribes were exceedingly diversified in natural features, rich in food supplies, and had good climatic conditions. 133 137

DIVISIONS, BANDS, AND HEADQUARTERS. *The Flathead.*—It seems now impossible to get a full list of the bands of the Flathead tribe previous to their change of organization brought about by the introduction of the horse and subsequent prolonged wars with the Blackfoot. It appears that there were at least four distinct bands having their main winter camps in the western parts of the country. Of these, it seems that one was on a river near Helena, one near Butte, another smaller one somewhere east of Butte, and one somewhere in the Big Hole Valley. The Big Hole and Helena bands are said to have been large. There are traditions of two other bands, making probably six in all, but I did not learn the localities in which they had their headquarters. It seems that some of the bands did not always winter in the same locality, while others did. It is said that some parties wintered alternately at widely separate places in the eastern part of the country. The inference is that some were nomadic to a large extent, while others, probably the majority, generally wintered in definite "home" localities. In the fair season it seems that most 000

[23] If the Paloos are newcomers then they may have had the Nez Percé as southern neighbors; but the main settlements of the two tribes were far apart.